**Numbers in Formal Writing By: Deborah Justino**

**General Grammar Rules:**

1) Spell out single numbers smaller than 10.

Example: I ate *nine* cookies today. **NOT:** I ate 9 cookies today.

2) Use numerals for numbers that cannot be written in two or less words.

Example: I bought *105* books today. **NOT:** I bought one hundred and five books today.

3) Use numerals for dates.

Example: I have a test on May *27th*. **NOT**: I have a test on May twenty-seventh.

4) Use numerals when writing time if using “am” or “pm” but not if using “o’clock”.

Example: It was *4* pm when I got home.

It was *eight* o’clock when I woke up.

5) Use numerals for identification numbers.

Example: In chapter *3*, John learned how to use numbers in writing.

6) Do not start a sentence with a numeral.

Example: *Ten* students graduated last year. **NOT:** 10 students graduated last year.

7) When writing a list that includes numbers, be consistent rather than follow rules.

Example: I bought *three* apples and *ten* books. **NOT**: I bought three apples and 10 books.

I bought *3* apples and *10* books.

**Grade Level:** This lesson would be ideal for grade nine students. Given that these students are just beginning to learn how to write formal essays, they will need to know how to represent numbers within these essays.

**Activity**:

🡪Have the Jackson Five’s *ABC* song playing in the classroom while students come in (for fun/to get attention).

🡪Have students sit down and write on the board a sentence (preferably a grammatically complex one) in which a number is incorrectly written. Ex: “Liberal discourse in general is characterized by 2 central beliefs: a belief in the primacy of individual human rights and a belief in the centrality of freedom and choice.”

🡪Tell students there is one grammatical error in the sentence and the first individual to identify it gets a prize (ex. Chocolate, one less question for homework etc).

🡪Ideally, students will not guess the error right away.

🡪Reveal error and use it as segue into the lesson. Ask students what they know about how numbers should be written in formal essays🡪complete a mind-map on the board

🡪Go through the basic rules that determine how numbers are written in essays

🡪Have students practice these rules by completing the worksheet.

**Sources**:

Michael. (n.d.). 10 Rules for Writing Numbers and Numerals. *Daily Writing Tips*. Retrieved January 26, 2012, from http://www.dailywritingtips.com/10-rules-for-writing-numbers-and-numerals/

Purdue OWL: Numbers . (n.d.). *Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL)*. Retrieved January 27, 2012, from http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource

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**Numbers in Formal Writing Worksheet**

**Part A: Circle the appropriate symbol indicating whether the representation of numbers in each of the following sentences is correct. Rewrite each incorrect sentence to make it grammatically correct.**

1) I walked to school today with 2 of my friends. C:\Users\JUSTINO\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\UAZF1YAQ\MC900432537[1].png C:\Users\JUSTINO\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\9R5W8A7B\MC900434665[1].wmf

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2) 7 hours had passed before we got our tests back. C:\Users\JUSTINO\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\UAZF1YAQ\MC900432537[1].png C:\Users\JUSTINO\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\9R5W8A7B\MC900434665[1].wmf

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3) I was born in the winter of 1989. C:\Users\JUSTINO\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\UAZF1YAQ\MC900432537[1].png C:\Users\JUSTINO\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\9R5W8A7B\MC900434665[1].wmf

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4) Yesterday, my sister bought me 2 pairs of jeans and three t-shirts. C:\Users\JUSTINO\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\UAZF1YAQ\MC900432537[1].png C:\Users\JUSTINO\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\9R5W8A7B\MC900434665[1].wmf

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5) He was staying in room five when his sister showed up. C:\Users\JUSTINO\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\UAZF1YAQ\MC900432537[1].png C:\Users\JUSTINO\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\9R5W8A7B\MC900434665[1].wmf

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**Part B: Circle the correct sentence.**

1. A) Tomorrow, my class starts at 8am.

B) Tomorrow, I have to be at school for 8 o’clock.

1. A) I was watching the football game on channel twenty-two yesterday.

C:\Users\JUSTINO\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\8ZLUML04\MC900434411[1].wmfB) I needed to take highway 27 to get to his house.

1. A) He lives on 123 Fake Street.

B) It took her 5 days to finish her essay.

1. A) She received a cheque for $105.

B) She had two sandwiches for lunch and ate 10 Timbits.

1. A) 105 people showed up to recital last night.

B) He was nine years old when he learned how to ride a bike.